



ALTAY URANHAYLARI: MADDİ KÜLTÜR VE AİLE YAPISI

(Tarihi ve Etnografik Araştırma. XIX. Yy Sonları ve XX. Yy Başları)

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ÖZ

Altay Uranhayları Moğolistan'ın batısında yaşayan etnik gruplardan biridir. Hovd Nehri'nin yukarisından Bulgan Nehri'nin aşağısına kadar Moğol Altayları boyunca dağılmışlardır ve Hovd ilinin Duut ve Munkh- Khairkhan köylerinin; Buyant, Bulhan, Sagsai ve Altantsogts köylerinin ve kısmen de Bayan-Ulgii ilinin Delunn ve Tolbo köylerinin topraklarına yerleşmişlerdir. Ayrıca Zahçinler, Torgutlar, Myangatlar ve Uuldlar gibi Moğolca konuşan etnik gruplar da bu bölgelerin güneyinde, Durbetler, Bayidler ve Halkalar kuzeydoğusunda, Kazaklar, Altaylılar ve Tuyanlar gibi Türkçe konuşan etnik gruplar da kuzeybatısında yaşarlar.

Anahtar sözcükler: Altay, Oyratlar, geleneksel kültür, etnik gruplar, aile

THE ALTAI URIANKHAINS : MATERIAL CULTURE AND FORM OF THE FAMILY.

(The Historical and Ethnographical Investigation. Late XIX - Early XX centuries)

ABSTRACT

Altai Uriankhians are one of the ethnic groups which inhabit the western part of Mongolia. They are distributed over Mongolian Altai from the upper-streams of Khovd River to the upper-streams of Bulgan River and occupy territories of Duut and Munkh-Khairkhan Soms of Khovd Aimag, and Buyant, Bulgan, Sagsai, and Altantsogts somus, and partly Deluun and Tolbo Soms of Bayan-Ulgii Aimag. In addition, the other Mongolian-speaking ethnicities such as Zakhchins, Torghuts, Myangats, and Uulds reside to the south off them, Durbets, Bayids, and Khalkas - to the northeast off them, and the Turkish speaking ethnicities such as Kazakhs, Altains and Tuvans- to the west and northwest off them.

Keywords: Altai, oirat, traditional culture, ethnic groups, family,

1. Introduction

By data of 2000 census, Altai Uriankhians counted to be consist of 25.5 thousand people, the figure was likely has included Khuvsgul Uriankhians who till now have not been ethnographically studied, but it was known that the figure did in fact include part of Tuvans and Tadjins. Mostly, the latter ethnic groups are erroneously called as Uriankhians, although they would never call themselves as being as such (Ralidin 1968:31).

Altai Uriankhians, as the other ethnicities of Western Mongolia, speak oirat dialect of Mongolian language. As noted by investigators, the foundations of oirat dialect are based on Durbet dialect and these are significantly different from modern khalkha dialect. The khalkha dialect is the foundation of modern literary Mongolian, and it is spoken by the vast majority (more 90%) of population in Mongolia. The difference between oirat and khalkha dialects basically deals with their phonetical systems and also, into some extent, with their morphological as well as lexical specifics.

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Process of formation of modern ethnic composition in Mongolia was prolonged process and has passed a number of historical stages. The Oirats became more independent at the beginning of XY century. Probably, starting from that period Mongols were divided into two branches: eastern and western. The western branch characterized a certain unity in culture and livelihood although each group had somewhat definitive ethnographic originality.

This work presents an investigation of the traditional culture of the Altai Uriankhians. Since the XVI century, their encampments are located in the western and the north-western parts of Mongolia. However, it might be assumed that the formation of their traditional culture was a complex and has proceeded not only in their present areas of settlements, but it has been taking place in the broader historical as well as the geographical space. Appearance of the traditional culture of the Altai Uriankhians in a number of traits and characteristics reflect the way through which this nation has been evolved in the different periods of its historical development.

The author of the study aims to recreate the possibly more or less accurate pictures of the traditional culture of the Altai Uriankhians, highlighting the problems of their material culture (residence), family and social life. The chronological framework of the work covers mainly the end of XIX – the early XX centuries, but it also sometimes does excursion into more of earlier periods.

2. Historical information on the Uriankhains

The genus of the Uriankhain was one of the most ancient and powerful one that has directly involved in many of the most important historical events in the life of Mongols since the long period of times. For the first time they are mentioned in the legend of "Ergene-Kunes, cited by Rashid ad-Din in his famous "Compendium of Chronicles. According to it, among the tribes who had generalized name of "darligin," there was indicated a tribe called as "uriankhad. Tribal alliance "darligin" famously managed out of difficult terrain which lacked of living space (Rashid ad-Din 1952: 153-160).

Prominent historian D. Sukhbaatar alleges that those events that reflected in the legend of "Ergene-Kuns' can be attributed to the period of domination of the Huns in əxy Central Asia (Sukh - batar1980:184-186). Many historians, based on reports from Chinese sources say that the area "Ergene-kun" are to be about rivers in the region of Ergun-kun and Khingan Mountains in the east (Gantulga 2000:17-18). N.V. Kuner thought that word 'urianhat" was already known from the second millennium BC, when it was worn by tribes lived in Amur River basin, and then it began to spread westward (Kuner 1958: 215). L. L. Viktorova, who studied the issues of ethnogenesis of the Mongols, had an opinion that the I-III century BC on the vast territory from Lake Baikal in the west to Khingan Mountains including parts of Onon River in the east, lived syanbians who were originally called "Uriankhain (Viktorova 1980: 93). In her opinion, Uriankhains had kinship ties not only with the Huns, but with syanbians and uhantsains L. Gumilev also noted that in the V century BC in the northeast, near Onon River lived a tribe called urianhay "(Gumilev 1989:79-80).



Photo 1. Oirad Mongols ancient book spelling **tod useg**

The opinion is supported by the Mongolian scientist-ethnographer S. Badamhatan. He wrote that the word “urianhay” was distributed not only among the tribes that lived in the area of Onon River and Mount Burhan Haldun including Hingan Mountains in the east, but also among the tribes who lived in the mountains of Sayan Tannu-Ula (Ethnography of Mongolia 1996:276). Next, Uriankhain tribes would disappear, and then would reappear. In the Mongolian historical and literary sources of “Secret History of Mongols” you find information about the genus of Uriankhains. It says that Horilartay-Mergen from a tribe Hori-Tumet had migrated from the homeland Arik-Usun for mutual legal wrangling and arguments about the use of hunting grounds, under the patronage of Shinch-bayan-uriania, who was the master of Mount Burhan Haldun-Ula, where there were many wild animals (“Secret History of Mongols” of 1941, §9) Arising as according to historians in X century BC famous Mongolian genus borzhigin, to which belonged Khan himself, the founder of the centralized state of the Mongols in the XIII century, had a kinship with Uriankhain race. (“Secret History of Mongols” says about it: “... Going head-on, grabbed Bodochir a half-term pregnant woman: “... Who are you?” - He asked. “... –I am, she says, from the tribe Chzharchiut, on behalf of Adanhan-Urianhaizhin. ... after coming in to Bodonchiru, that half-term pregnant woman had a son. ... This was the origin of the genus Chzhadran. This woman gave birth to another son, is already on Bodonchir. ... Bodonchir became the founder generation Borzhigin (“Secret History of Mongols,” 1941, § 38-42).

The Court of Genghis Khan had a number of famous military leaders - people from the genus of Uriankhai, including such brilliant generals of Genghis Khan as of Chzhelme, Subeetay, and Udach. After the formation of the centralized Mongolian state in 1206, all these generals were appointed by Genghis Khan as the chief-in-nyoyon of Tumen, which had become the bases of the newly established Mongolian state. Uriankhain Tumen, the leader of which was Udach, by right of inheritance was carrying security guards in the area "Ikh Horig" where there was a collective burial of ancestors of Genghis Khan, Altan Urag. They were called s darhads (protected). By

order of Genghis Khan, they were released from the other Khans services, including military service.

All Uriankhain Tumen first were under Tulu, the youngest son of Genghis Khan, and then Elzhigidey Noyon, who was the son Hachiun-brother of Genghis Khan. One part of the genus of Uriankhain then moved into submission Arik Buh, who was the fifth son of Tula. Then Uriankhain tribes were under the influence of various historical events and were divided into several pieces as being scattered in the west, east and central parts of Mongolia.

After the death of Genghis Khan, the struggle began for the throne of the great khan of all Mongolia. In the competition between Arik Buh and Kublai, Arik Buh relied on the Oirat, among whom there was also the genus of Uriankhain (Gantulga 2000: 42).

During the period of the Yuan dynasty (1260-1368), Mongolia has ceased to be the political center of the empire. Founder of the dynasty, Kublai Khan (1223-1293) gave Mongolia into submission to its fourth son Nomhon, and in 1294, when he died, he was succeeded by his grandson Kublai Gamalag, who was the son of his second son Chingim.

During the Kublai Khan, part of Uriankhains /according to some estimates there were about 30 000/, was settled along the Great Wall of China. According to some Mongolian historians, Kublai himself relocated Uriankhains there from the area "Ikh Horig" where they were stationed as security guards at the graves of the great khans of Mongolia. When the Yuan Empire fell, these Uriankhians began to play an important role in the fight of Mongols for the restoration of its rule in China. The rulers of Ming dynasty (1368-1644), who replaced the Yuan, organized a major military campaign against them in 1387, as a result, they were subjugated. These Uriankhians known from historical sources as "Uriankhians of the three guards – Gurvan haruulyn urianhians.

Mongolian sources from the period of Ming Dynasty wrote about the other Uriankhains as follow: "... Uriankhians are very brave. They live on the northern side of Gobi semi-deserts. Mongolians call them by the nickname yellow Mongols - (yellow Huwa). One prisoner's beard and whiskers were light in color. His hair was stiff, his eyes were yellow, the body healthy and incredibly moving. Another tribe named as the urianhians is located in the northwest. By nature they are alike each other. They had attached a red-colored tape to the headgear. The number of troops was less than one Tumen (ten thousand). They breed mainly horses and camels" (Historical note on the Oirats 1985:6).

By the end of XIV century, Uriankhians had briefly left the stage of history, but since the XVI century, a number of sources did start mentioning about them with the connection of turbulent political events taking place during that period. Batmunh Dayan Khan (1466-1517) had temporarily suspended the separatist trend in Mongolia that began after the fall of the Yuan dynasty in 1368. Batmunh Dayan Khan had trusted and often relied on Uriankhain Tumen in his numerous military campaigns with the aim of suppressing those separatists. Under him, Mongolia was divided into ten Tumens, four of them were oirats and the remaining six Tumens were Eastern Mongolians. The latter

were the mainstay of Dayan Khan. They were in turn divided into three left and three right Tumens. According to sources, among the three left tumens there was Uriankhain Tumen.

Batmunkh Dayan Khan especially emphasized the merits of the Uriankhains before the great ancestors. He was fond of saying that: "... they /Uriankhains - I.Lkhagvasuren/ have the great destiny to guard the tomb of our great ancestors" (Sagan Setsen 1960:209). Batmunkh Dayan Khan himself had been associated with the Uriankhains via family ties. But by the end of his reign, he ordered, Uriankhains were denied the right to have their own Tumen and they were divided into smaller parts. The sources reported the following: "... Uriankhain Tumen raised a rebellion against the authority of Dayan Khan. Dayan Khan sent Tsakar and Khalkha Tumens against them. He also informed about it to his son Barsbold Zhonon who raised against them three Western Tumens. Clash of the combined forces with Uriankhains occurred in the area Zorgol. Uriankhain Tumen was defeated there. After that they were denied the right to have their own Tumen and incorporated into 5 different Tumens, dividing them into smaller pieces" (Sagan Setsen 1960:215). Sources did not report on the reasons of why Uriankhains rebelled against the Great Khan.

After these events Uriankhains finally lost their former power. According to Mongolian sources, after Batmunkh Dayan Khan, one part Uriankhains was subordinate to his younger son Gersenze /1513-1549/. He owned a vast territory from Khingan Range in the east to the Altai Mountains in the west, down to Gobi Desert in the south. In his possession, he instilled a new administrative system, the smallest unit of which was "khoshun, but the borders of the newly created khoshuns remained unexecuted until the end of his power. Then there were created seven khoshuns, the sources referred to them as the "seven northern khoshuns " or "seven Khalkh khoshuns. The Uriankhain tribes were included in the two khoshuns. Sources are sometimes called then as "two Uriankhians" or "Khalkha Uriankhians. When Gersenze died, his widow has divided his possessions among the sons. Regarding this, a source says: "... after the death of Gersenze, his widow Ikh Taih was giving her seven sons gifts. ... the seventh son Sam Buyman was given a Uriankhain land. Buyman himself was born in the year of the wooden dragon" (Galdan tuslagch 1961:67-68). According to Mongolian historian Ts. Gantulga, this in fact were Uriankhians known in history as the "two Uriankhians" or "Khalkha Uriankhians (Gantulga2000: 63). Buyman himself was born from the younger wife of Gersenze, Menhuy, who was from the genus of Uriankhain and Buyman was the youngest son, so he got the Uriankhain land. Sons of Gersenze lived with their possessions on the left and right sides of the Khangai mountains. Later, several hundred Uriankhains were led by Dorzhavdan Ilden, the second son of Sam Buyman, moved into the area of the lake Huh-Nuur Lake. They created a new khoshun there, which came to be known as "Khalkh Khoshun of Huh-Nuur Lake."

Since the end of the XVII century, large part of Uriankhains become active participants of the so-called "Alliance of Four Oirat" which then became the basis of Junggar Khanate (1635-1758). This was reported in the source as follows: "... These Uriankhians with such tribes as tsoros, derbet, torguud, hoshiud, hoyd and consisted of four large Oirats, and was one of the Oirats (History of the Alliance of four Oirats 1992:274). N.Y. Bichurin noted that "... Uriankhians lived under the leadership of the

tribal chief Tsoros (Bichurin 1834: 31). Of the same opinion had Mongolian ethnographer H. Nyambuu (Nyambuu 1992:123). Mongolian historian Ts. Gantulga based on historical sources with respect to Oirats concludes that ancestral leaders – noyons of genus tsoros, who was one of the major genus of “Union of Four Oirats”, were descendants of Uriankhain warlord Chzhelme the Hero of the seventh generation, but were not descendants of Hutug-Bekh as believed by some historians (Gantulga 2000:165).

Mongolian sources of this period reported that "... there are several different kinds of Uriankhains. They live by hunting. One part is subject to Oirats, and another part – to Khalkh (Historical Notes 1961: 9). Gradually they were involved in a lengthy struggle for hegemony between Khalkh and Oirat Union.

In 1587 (The Lunar Year of Pig) has occurred a major clash between military forces between Khalkh and Oirat Union, which ended in a complete defeat of military forces of Khalkh (Zlatkin 1964:112-114). Khalkh army led by Sholoi-Ubashi-Khuntaiji (1567-1627), who was the great-grandson of Gersenze and went down in history as the first Altan Khan, a warlord allied with Uriankhain Sain Madzhig. O

f great interest presents the identity of Sayn Madzhig. He had been repeatedly mentioned in Mongolian sources, such as "The History by man named Asragch (Asragch Nertiyn Tuukh)," The Millennium Chronicle "(Altan Khurden Myangan Khegeest Bichig)," A Brief History of the Mongols "(Iltgel Shashtir). They say that "... his name is Zorigt Chandgan Sain Mazhig or Tsol Tsetsen Noyon. He was born in 1560, and was the fourth son of Sam Buyman (grandson of Gersenza - IL.). He ruled the land Uriankhain (Otog) and glorified by the nickname "Black Tiger Mountain and Uriankhain Sain Mazhig." According to Ts. Gantulga, he received Uriankhain land inherited from his father Sam Buyman, which, as mentioned above, got as a gift from his mother after the death of his father Gersenze.

The Uriankhians took an active part in the high-profile military and political developments in Dzhungarian Khanate during the Galdan Boshigt Khan (1644-1697). Historian S. Buyanchuluun wrote that "... Galdan Boshigt Khan gradually gained momentum. A total of 11 Tumens consisting of Uuld, Khalkh, and Uriankhian tribes were under his command" (Buyanchuluun 1937: 92).

3. Material Culture.

The basic economic structure - nomadic herding - left a deep imprint on the entire material culture of Altai Uriankhians. Type of their dwellings, utensils, vehicles, clothes and food were determined by the necessity of frequent migrations over long distance. Like the rest of the population of Mongolia, they have adapted to specific natural geography and climate of the region and created their own unique and inimitable material culture.

Residence: Space Within and Around. The most important function of any shelter is to provide a person a protection from the harmful effects on the part of environment. Folk housing of any geographical area, whether in the Arctic Circle or in the tropics, the mountains or the steppes, adapted to the conditions of nature and

climate (Voronina 1982:48). Real Estate and its closely related economic and household buildings are one of the main elements of material culture. They are created by people in the process of collective labor, the transformation of the natural and geographical environment and actively adapt to it (Types of Traditional Rural Dwellings 1979:5).

The main housing of the Altai Uriankhians served Mongolian felt yurt-ger. The same yurt with only minor differences in its external form and internal furniture have served as the main dwelling for all Turkic-Mongol peoples of southern Siberia, Buryat, Tuva, Altai, and Kalmyk who settled in Russia.

The felted yurt was simple to manufacture, portable, and ready-made, adapted to the conditions of nomadic life. The yurt was convenient as a round shape made it possible to use all the space. This house and its quality factor felt covering well-kept sharp changes of climatic conditions in the hot summer months it was cool, but in winter it protected people from the cold winds, frost and rainfall.

By the end of the XIX century – the beginning of XX century there were three main varieties of Mongolian yurt - Khalkh, Oirat and Southern Mongolian that slightly differed in shape and the materials from which they were made. The main differences were only in the size and names of parts of the yurt. Altaic Uriankhians mostly lived in a yurt of Oirat type, which in its size far exceeded Khalkh and Southern Mongolian yurts. In addition, their gers had significant differences as compared to gers of Turkish speaking neighbors, Kyrgyz and Kazakhs. Regarding this subject, M.V. Singers wrote: "... dwelling of Mongols consists of a felt tent (ger), which differs from Kyrgyz ones mainly by the form of its upper half. In Kyrgyz yurt, it is spherical, and the Mongolian - conical, which obviously depends on the shape of a wooden core, tight with felt cover. Frames that supports the dome of Kyrgyz yurt, are convex, while that for Mongolian gers, are straight. ... The Mongolian yurt has a wooden hinged door, which is drawn to face to the south. ... Outdoor decorations, like Kyrgyz yurts, felt in the middle part is often covered with colorful pattern, but for Mongolian dwelling does not have such a decoration"(Pevtsov 1951:110).

The yurt of Altaic Uriankhians consisted of a sliding wall lattice-terem, made of willow sticks placed crosswise on top of each other and fixed at the intersection of rawhide thongs made of camel hair. This design allows easy push and put the links of the lattice. When assembling the yurt wall lattice joined among themselves, spurred on height and shape, connected by hair ropes - teremny boolt. A place where docked such lattices, called "wolf's mouth" - chonyn am. But gratings were another place which was called "a dog's mouth" - nohoinii am. They cannot be docked at this point. A wall lattice had 10 to 15 heads. Sizes and capacity were determined by the number of walls of the yurt arrays installed in a circle and forth between them. According to the Altai Uriankhians on one wall lattice is good for one person with bed and property. The most common of these sizes were 4-walled yurt.



Photo 2. Buddhist bronze statue **burkhan**

Unlike the Khalkh and Southern Mongolian yurts, the 4-wall yurt had no internal supports, i.e., bagana, and all of its construction were held with belt, which are tied up around the walls of the lattice and fixed to the sides of door. Relaxation or rupture of these belts has meant that the walls of the lattice remained without support and design of the yurt was falling apart. However, these belts to retain the load are only 4-5 walled grids, but no more. Therefore, for a yurt, with more than 5 wall lattices, it would be sure to do support backups, carrying the weight of the top cover and attach to the sustainability of a yurt.

The entrance to the tent was carried out through the front door. Earlier, door frame was made of wood and curtain of their first skins of wild beasts, and later, curtain was made of felt. In this case, details of doors, lintel, cloth and a threshold made of wood rounded on the basis of the rounded shape of the yurt. There was the traditional method of making the felt doors - they are sure to embroider with traditional ornament. Then the wooden doors came into being. The height of the wooden doors was equal to that of wall lattices. The door has always oriented to the south.

The yurt of Altaic Uriankhians, have the willow staves - uni, linked lattice walls with the top wooden circle – hole - garats. One end of the stave was sharpened, the other was equipped with a loop, through which they would hang on the ends of the wall lattice. The wooden framework of ger is covered with felt blankets - deever. The superior felt cover of the tent consisted of two parts: the front and back. The upper part of the cover is also clothed on outer circle of the upper wooden circle of yurt, the lower part clothed the repeated form of wall lattices, blocking their heads. During winter, usually 3-4 layers of felt are used, and during summer number of felt layers reduced to

a single one. Lateral wall felt consisted of several pieces. Normal size of ger had from 6 to 9 pieces of lateral wall felts. They repeated the form of wall trellises and fastened to each other by knots. Felt covering which clothes the top wooden circle-hole of the yurt (urh) designed to protect against weather and regulation of light and temperature inside the yurt. In addition, a yurt Altaic Uriankhians used for its stability and a lot of hair ropes of knots - oosor, goshlon etc. Yurt was also with the pressure belts attached to stakes driven into the ground. Such clamping belts were especially comfortable in summer-autumn period, when the Mongolian Altai has had frequent strong storms and winds. Insolation, aeration and lighting within the tent are carried out through the upper smoke hole.



Photo3. Copper kettles **guts** for the holy water.

Assembling of the yurt is done in the following sequence: set the frame, covering the wooden construction with felt, placement of furniture and utensils. First, proceed to the installation and stretching of wall lattices. Moreover, the lattice wall is installed in a specific order from the door to the left, i.e., to the west, as the door facing south; first it starts at the door on the right set lattice, and then the north-west link, and finally they would link to the eastern part of the door. Installing wooden frame doors, walls covered with lattice inside the upper and lower belts, the ends of which are attached to the rings, specially fastened to the lintel of the door. Then willow poles are installed, connecting the lattice wall to the upper timber circle - a hole. To do this first into a hole in the top wood circle the upper end of the willow staves are inserted with the support of a man from the bottom, and the other end of willow staves is attached to the head of wall lattices. Initially, it should insert four willow stave poles with four sides,

and then using the tightening of internal wall climbing and rope-chagtag attached to the upper smoke hole, achieved the correct form of the yurt, and then inserted the remaining poles. This completes the assembly of the wooden skeleton of the yurt.

The wooden skeleton of the yurt was covered as follows. On top of the wooden part of the roof stretched white cloth -dotuur burees, lower and upper ends of the ribbons which were attached to the wall to the upper grille and the wooden circle, then placing the upper feltspread. Side walls of the lattice are also closed with felt veils -tuurga and covered the outer upper and outer lower belts of hairy ropes-gaduur goshlon. In addition, each tent had felt tire-urh for the upper range of the smoke tube. It was a piece of felt hexagonal shape, to each his corner sewn long rope from horsehair, five of which are stretched to the wall and ceiling coverings and felt tied to the outer side belts. Rope is sewn into the front corner, which is used for closure or opening of the top cover holes. Disassemble of the yurt is done as in the reverse order.



Photo4. Wooden kettle **dombo** for milk tea

The internal layout of the yurt for Altaic Uriankhians is divided into the following functional parts: if staying in a yurt, facing to south, i.e., to the entrance, the division looks like this: male (right side of the entrance), female (left side of the entrance), honorable (front or opposite to the entrance), non-honorables (front part), etc. The division of the yurt on such sectors was due to traditional notions about the organization of housing space and etiquette norms prescribed for family members. As rule, they tend be strictly adhered to.

The left side of the entrance, which was considered part of the female, there were household utensils and dining room furniture, possessions for women mistress. There was a small stool with a box – ukheg just in few steps the entrance in which the owner kept her sewing accessories. Behind it was put wooden bed for the owners of the yurt. The most northern front side khoimor a place over the fireplace was considered the most sacred and honorable place in the yurt. Here was located the altar with a small box-burhan shiree on which the gold, silver and copper statues of Buddhist sculptures of gods and Bodhisatwas, or their images in the drawings, applications, must necessarily present the sacrificial cups - takhilyn tsugts, lamps, zul - candles and other attributes of the traditional Lamaist religion and a variety of family – genesis conservatives called as sakhuis.

Altar was the indispensable attribute of the yurt among Altaic Uriankhians. According to the description G.E.Grumm-Grzhimailo, who has studied the life of the Tuvians, Tuvian altar in the tent, had a strong resemblance to the altar of the Altai Uriankhians (Grumm-Grzhimailo 1926:39). The researchers correctly note that the appearance of the altar in the tent of the Turkic-Mongol peoples of Southern Siberia is associated with the spread of Buddhism in those regions.

Near to the altar there were two or three handmade chest - avdar that store particularly valuable items (Darbakova 1968: 37) At the same area stood a low table-shiree and small-sized chest-shurguulga. Furnishing the front and other parts of the yurt was a serious concern of its owners, because with this place, as with the rest of the Altai Uriankhians has been associated with a number of important family, household, and religious prescriptions, prohibitions, regulations, etc.

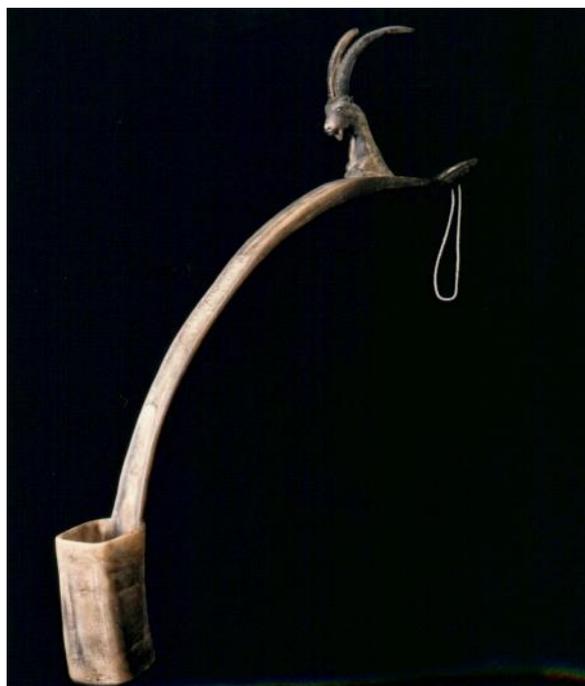


Photo 5 Wooden spoon **khutguur** for koumiss (fermented mare's milk)

In the center of the yurt was located a traditional stove without chimney-tulga. It consisted of three stones. The whole family life flowed around this hearth-golomt, which was considered the sacred and semantic center of the home, and determines all of his organization. The hearth was considered one of the most sacred places in the tent: it was considered that the "boss" of fire (galyn burhan) lived in the fire, which was the keeper of the prosperity and happiness of the family. The Altai Uriankhians have many taboos associated with the domestic hearth: it is impossible to pour water on the fire, throw garbage onto the fire and other household vermin, step over it or sit near it with outstretched legs, and etc. It was considered a terrible sin to spit into the fireplace. It was believed that it could cause the extinction of race. The preservation and continuation of the genus of the Altai Uriankhians was the most sacred thing in their lives.

Above the fireplace was the upper range of the smoke tent. In addition to that, it served as a natural source of the fan and fluorescent lighting, and it also served as a determinant of time: on that as a ray of sunshine, hitting through it, moved on the walls of grating, one could accurately determine the time of day. These were the sort of sunny hours of the nomads. D. Maidar specifically studied the Mongolian yurt, wrote that the functional areas of its internal planning coincided with a specific animal from a 12-year cycle lunisolar calendar nomads (Maidar, Darisuren 1976:17-18). For example, lama, from whom the Altai Uriankhians seek advice before the wedding, indicated by year of birth of groom at what time should start a wedding convoy to the place where a new set of yurt to newlyweds. It could be, for example, the hour of white sheep or the hour of white horse, and etc. According to the ingress of solar beam at the appropriate place in the yurt could easily determine the time to begin a successful journey.

The upper range of the smoke was considered as the hearth and the altar, one of the sacred parts of the yurt. Altaic Uriankhians believed that through him to them in the house comes happiness through him by members of the family relationship with the gods, inhabitants of heaven, who look on them from above, and thereby affect the welfare of the family as a whole. On the right side of the yurt, a little further away from the entrance on the wall hung a leather wineskin lattices (huhuur) for fermented milk, or koumis, here arranged supplies for riding.

The western part belonged to the guests, and the north-western part - the owner and children. Hunting equipment stored on the male side, near to the site of the owner.

Floor in yurts is blanketed with the two types of coatings: felt sheeting (shirdeg) and skins of domestic animals, particularly, those of cattle and horses (adsaga). In the front part, the most honorable part, always has felt lay litter, which is produced by the traditional method of wool with the mandatory patterned embroideries. The remaining part of the floor is covered with several skins, more often being not dressed. These felt sheetings were used by many nomadic peoples of southern Siberia, which once again confirms the presence of ethnogonical, historical, and cultural ties between the Altai Uriankhians with those peoples.

In addition to yurts, Altai Uriankhians also enjoyed with similar to tent housing constructions - hatguur, degle. It was of two kinds. The first represents only part of the

dome tent without lattice-walls. During the fieldwork, I have heard many times from older informants that in the days of their youth it was taken to put such housing for married couples. In their view, this was done in order to emphasize the modesty of a young family, not courting to it of evil spirits (Lkhagvasuren 1987:58). The second type of dwellings differed in that there was no smoke hole, and the ceiling poles just links in a bundle. W. Erdniev wrote that in the tent of Kalmykia, in the ethnic composition of which included a lot of Uriankhian genera, "the number of people living in a tent with an area of 18-22 square meters on average, could be up to 8 - 12 people (Erdniev, Maksimov, 2007:273)

While any yurt stands on a seasonal parking lot, it is formed a definite economic space around it, which contained the following items: tethering post (morin uyaa), winter paddocks for sheep and goats (saravch), summer and autumn fence for calves (tugalyn zel), a place to dry manure (argalyn hashaa), and a place for waste, etc. Location and distance of objects from the yurt depended on their place and importance in the economy.

In addition to being as permanent residents in the yurt, it also has served for all sorts of religious ceremonies, for hosting receptions of guests, in the early spring time, it is rescued newborn calves, lambs and kids from the cold.

Except yurt, our informants did not remember regarding the other kinds of dwellings which were used by the Altai Uriankhians in the late XIX and the early XX century. This is confirmed by G.N. Potanin: conical huts, and hexagonal huts, which are found in the Altai region among our telengits, altaic and chernev tatars, are not found in the north-western Mongolia, south of Tann-Oi (Potanin 1881:108).

4. Social organization and family relations.

The social system of the Mongols late XIX - early XX centuries. remained feudal, but different from the feudalism of the inherent agricultural peoples. However, it was very close to the feudal system of other nations, the basis of economy of those was nomadic herding, but its specificity, expressed in various areas of industrial relations, especially in the field of land relations and forms of exploitation, as well as the intertwining of feudal relations with respects of patriarchy, clan, and community relations.

Representatives of the nomadic herders and hunters did not have ownership on the land, and on any nomadic area or pasture. They only use those lands on which lived, roamed, grazed their cattle, sowed grain, or hunted, and enjoyed, as a rule, not alone but together with other nomads as long as it wished by khoshun ruler.

4.1.Nomadic Group - Khoton (Khot Ail) and Seasonal migrations.

In the late XIX - early XX century, the vast majority of the Altai Uriankhians wandered not alone, not by individual households and small groups of a few yurts. They, like all other Mongolians, have had a kind of nomadic groups - small

communities, which was called "Khoton", or "Khot Ail." It played an extremely important role in their lives.

The word "Khoton" Uriankhians designated cluster of yurts, farms, whose number has reached 6 - 8 or more. Small groups of 1-3 yurts called "Ail". "Ail" is practically a farm. Over time, the word "Khoton" has changed and it became somewhat vague, sometimes coinciding with the meaning of the word "Ail". In all cases, the word "Khoton" signified not just a yurt, or a group of gers, namely agriculture, or group of farms. The word "Khoton" was still set to "corral", so this term does not apply to village, town and monastery, yurts, which were commonly used for other words - "ger" or "Ail".

Nomadic group Khoton was a very ancient form of Mongolian society. B.J. Vladimirtsov wrote that there were "... two types of nomadic Mongols from XI-XII century. On the one hand, lived and roamed more or less large groups, on the other hand, the opposite phenomenon is observed: some families migrate alone, isolated or small units that occur in modern Mongols of Khalkh and Khovd Aimag, for example, where you rarely see a cluster in one place for more than 2 - 3 yurts - Ails (Vladimirtsov 1934:36-37). In his view, the larger groups have been beneficial in respect of defense against attacks, but inconvenient for cattle grazing. Therefore, the Mongols sought a way to combine the two migrations, or in case of external security, all go to the first method.

The very existence of such nomadic groups or small communities, as Khoton of the Mongols, including in the Altai Uriankhians not an exception. The presence of various forms of community in the nomadic pastoralists established for a number of nationalities, the social system which was a feudal (Tuva, Altai, the Kirghiz, Kazakhs, etc.). The researchers note that such a small community is the bearer of patriarchal relations in their lives. Indeed, that was the main breeding ground, which supported the existence of the various patriarchal remnants used in exploiting for their feudal rulers (Potapov, 1969:115).

According to surveys of informants, the Altai Uriankhians in late XIX - early XX century, there were various khotons by its composition:

a) Khoton, fully or almost fully connected relationship. This is the most common type of khotons. For example, together roamed his father and married sons, brothers or sisters, father and their families, brothers, sisters, mothers and some of their connexion with the families, etc.;

b) Khoton, unrelated half. This is also one of the most common types in which there were two or three separate family groups, with little or no interconnected relationship. In these farms, there were 3 to 5 yurts;

c) Khoton, unrelated. This is the most rare type of Khoton, which is the union households, totally unrelated kin. In this case, adherence to to this type of khotons creates the desire to get experienced in one respect or another from person with production skills of livestock breeding, hunting, crafts, etc. There were examples of adherence to Khoton, is a member of a good hunter, to hunt through the joint groups, to learn the subtleties of this type of subsistence. On-site hunter could be a good stockman, carpenter, etc. For wealthy households the most important incentive

associations in khotons of this type is the need for working hands, and for poor households - the complexity of self-existence, etc. Number of holdings, economically more or less independent, not-associated with relatives lineage, was small.

d) Khotons - loners. According to our informants, Khoton singles were a rare exception. Sometimes alone roamed only the rich farming, for which clustering in one place for a large number of cattle created a shortage of pasture.

Thus, the composition of khotons is largely determined by the relationship of its members. It is clearly dominated by those of unrelated khotons. For fully or partly related khotons, joining to them, as a rule, were free to all comers, and for unrelated Khotons, joining them were required a preliminary agreements.

Someone else's household, has acceded to one or another Khoton, in the event of failure to migrate to another location, sometimes that household subjected to a boycott against the joint work (grazing of animals), but nevertheless denying one or another farm to join the chosen khoton was impossible. Quite interesting issue is the question of constancy of khotons. Generally speaking, a separate Khoton is not a permanent union. Having been around today, it could disappear tomorrow if any of the components of its economy, for any reason will disperse. Number of khotons would be constantly changing, albeit in a well-known, but fairly narrow limits. Period of existence of a separate khotons has been measured from the time of their parking lot (week, fortnight, month, 4-6 months) to several, and sometimes, many years. The conclusion is that the constancy of khotons to a large extent depended on family connections within it. Khoton had no settled place of settlements and put their yurts in different seasons in different places depending on where they have been herding their cattle. Movements of khotons were relatively constant, although the order from Soum and more from the khoshun's Governor those khoton rules for nomadic movements could change at any time.

Most older and experienced man is considered as head-ahlagch of this khoton. On his behalf the given khoton was called, and he played a leading role in the life of farming, which represented the community. Its degree of respect depended mainly on the property he owned, relatives relationships, production skills and personal qualities. His power and influence were not absolute, and ranks varied greatly in different khotons. Basically, he served as as counselor in the affairs of the collective and individual economy, the relationship between members of khotons and family affairs. After consulting with his khotons, he appointed time migrations to seasonal pastures, date of sowing, date of harvesting for hay for feeding livestock in winter, etc. As the senior in Khoton, his advice was followed not only on economic but also on various family and household affairs. Together with him it was addressed the advice of Khoton prayers. Often, despite the presence of older, economic affairs led by the younger and more active members of the association who is the most prosperous in this sector. Khoton is not an administrative unit. Participation of khotons chapter in the relations of members of this association with the authorities sometimes expressed in the advice and guidance to these members for their position before the authorities, in giving a kind of installations on one or another issues, each owner would contact with

representatives khoshuns administration directly, without the direct involvement of senior khotons.

According to surveys of informants, social and economic structure of khotons was not uniform. Often within it lived and roamed the family together with different material prosperity. Among them were both rich and poor.

Some khotons in fact were no longer Khoton community, but a mere nomad settlement of the wealthy, which included, besides his family, dependent relatives and the poor in-law, who worked on it for free, and operated them under the guise of kinship care. According to the story of our informants, among such Khotons stood out richer Khotons: it was bigger and seemingly stronger than the others. Huddled near itself three or four, rarely more yurts of poor people who use horse and cattle of rich owner, and who are as service-maids-zarts for pastoralists and they would need as appropriate. Such a system reflects the basic trend of economic structure of khotons for that time, but that is not exhaustive. Along with the described khotons were quite a few where people are economically not very different from each other. Such as Khoton certainly was, depending on whether a rich man or a ruler (carrying various feudal taxes in kind, and was subjected to cruel exploitation), but inside it flowed own life, in which significant quantities of community-based orders.

The main cause of establishment of khotons was, according to the unanimous approval of our informants, common grazing in any season. Particular attention was paid to the composition of pasture grass, which was known to be uneven. Each type of cattle demanded a certain type of pasture. Therefore it was necessary to choose a pasture grass which structure best suits to a particular type of livestock. This method of selection of pastures has long been known to the Mongols. He confirmed the well-known episodes of " Secret History" (Secret History of Mongols 1941, § 118). Also in connection with the traditional division of the season on a favorable summer-autumn and adverse winter-spring periods, respectively, divided and seasonal pastures: winter - uvulzuu, spring-khavarjaa, summer - zuslan and autumn - namarjaa. Also differ in the nearby - oiryn, and far - kholyn pastures.

Distant pastures are usually used in the clear, fine days, and nearby ones - during the rainy, windy and snowy days. In clear and windless days, the herding cattle usually would take place in open places, and on windy days - the pastures with natural shelter from strong winds. We can not say that the migrations among the Altai Uriankhians migrations take place not in an organized and spontaneous way although migrations were caused by the very nature of agriculture and all depended on climatic conditions. The reasons for the seasonal migrations of the Altai Uriankhians include the following: 1. inadequate capacity, inappropriate vegetation structure and lack of drinking water for livestock, 2. need to be cool in the heat in summer and a warm place for grazing cattle in winter; 3. need for joint farming with other farms. These mostly natural factors encourage them to frequent nomadic in seasons. Behind them was the main reason such as economic interest in the multiplication of cattle.

Each nomadic group Khoton, given its capabilities (labor and draft power) wandered the certain area according to the strict route, knowing where and how many days can graze cattle. The larger the economy, the greater care needed for cattle

consequently, the shorter period of next migrations would be required. In the year-round pasture feeding of livestock to clearly distinguish between two periods: summer-autumn (May-October) and winter-spring (November-February). The task of the summer-autumn grazing period was reduced to ensure that as soon as possible after the winter lead to better nutritional status of cattle. Our informants have argued that a good fattening cattle in this period was achieved at the expense of frequent change of pasture, and providing the livestock of good drinking water, and choice of pasture with specific composition of plants, visit with cattle the salt flats for at least 3-4 times per month, besides organization of protection livestock from predators.

More responsible and difficult is the winter-spring period. During this period, cattle systematically undernourished, because forage was of poor quality and insufficient quantity on the winter pasture. Nevertheless, winter subsistence for the cattle plays a decisive role, since it depended on the welfare of animals in general.

Feature of the nomadic Altaic Uriankhians was that winter and autumn parkings were in the river valleys, and summer and spring parkings were high in the mountains. This type of nomadic migrations A.D. Simukov called as "alpine" (Simukov 2007:445). These specific migrations were due primarily to climatic and landscape conditions Mongol Altai.

Deep snow and high winds forced the shepherds in the mountains in winter to descend from the mountains and wander into the valley of the rivers and lakes. Relatively high summer temperatures forced them to look for parking in the mountains. Between them there are spring and fall sites. Pasture areas are located alongside with the path of migrations, do not meet the needs of the herd, and used them as transient and passing. They have served as a preparatory stage for the summer and winter. Altaic Uriankhians, usually with the onset of summer, i.e., from mid-May, began to roam for summer sites. They would change the place 1-2 times, and sometimes, depending on the weather and grass, would do from 3 to 4 migrations. Migrations for the autumn park began around mid-August. It, as usual, was close to winter parking site, during his stay in the autumn park, they would correct fences for sheep and goats, or build new farm buildings at winter as to preparation for the winter. Migrations to winter parking begin in late October and sometimes November. They would stay at winter site until mid-February. Starting mid-February, and sometimes early March they would begin migrations toward spring parking. They spend there the period of offspring of all species of livestock. The distance between summer and winter parking khotons ranged from 20 - 30 to 60 - 80 miles in one direction, while large farms, with prevalence in the herds of yaks and cattle were doing migrations to a distance ranging from 120 to 140 km. (Lkhagvasuren 1988:250). Predominance in the herd of yaks and cattle made it possible to travel the long distance, although migrations involved small cattle.

The number of intermediate stops at the far migrations ranged from 5 to 8. Those families, who have had a large number of cattle, would leave the spring parking lot before the others they left with their herds, and did more than any other sites.

Large herd moves very slowly, stopping at each parking for 2-4 days to rest in order to gain strength for emaciated cattle during the winter, and they could proceed farther. Therefore, households with such animals moved slowly for a period of 7 - 13

days. Gaps between the parking lots ranged from 10 to 15 km, depending on the state of vegetation and terrain. For example, parking in the open did not last long, cool spring breeze acted negatively on the cattle, and in places protected from the wind (at the foot of the mountains or valley), animals stood a little longer. In this context, of particular interest is the constancy of sites and routes of migrations of khotons. The significant changes would occur in the usual route of migrations of khotons during the years of the adverse climatic conditions with the abundant snowfall - dzud or drought-gan, which were repeated often enough. As a rule, number of migrations and the length of nomadic ways would sharply increase. According to our informants, despite of the long journey of migrations, and the large number of cattle and farms, nomads never had any cases of arguments and fight over the parking sites and pastures between different farms. Khoton in the field of their summer-autumn pastures would often jointly build the common wooden fence (khashaa) for sheep and goats. Animals were kept together in this open-fence. They also have built the corrals (khashaa) and for lambs and kids. For feeding livestock, especially females and young, they would jointly prepare the hay. The combining of multiple farms in one khoton at the winter parking lot was of great significance for the cattle. The skillful arrangement of yurts and building of individual fences have them given the greater protection from wind and cold, and besides protecting animals of the attacks of wolves. The hay harvested together those living in one khoton only for feeding calves. From mid-August the grass was cut with a knife or just pulled his hands. Then they let a little dry to it, twist in long braids, hung on trees or on the platform, where it was stored until required. Some khotons work together and spread on the processing of arable land. In such cases, each family plot plowed together.

They have also helped each other during the harvest. Collective work of the residents of one khotons also referred to hunting, sheep shearing and manufacture of felt, on mutual assistance in the firewood, etc. etc. All the joint work being done to a neighbor (often at the same time, relatives) of mutual aid.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the economic basis of nomadic groups or communities in the Altai Khoton Uriankhians were a nomadic pastoral economy with private ownership of livestock, shelter (tent), and tools. Land, mainly pastures and grazing grounds, on which they ran the household, was owned by a feudal ruler of the khoshun. The land was allotted to Khoton community in general use. Given to them for the use of nomadic pastures all members of the khotons enjoyed together, without any conversion, and only the lands cultivated by tillage, as we saw above, were individually owned, while these lands were handled by one or the other member of the community. Low level of development of nomadic pastoralism and its natural character went a long way striving to Uriankhians Altai nomadic communities, because with this method increased the viability of pastoralist-commune in the struggle with nature, to facilitate the management of extensive cattle breeding in the particular natural environment, with a long and cold winter, and to provide personal safety and a minimum standard of living.

4.2. Form of the Family and its Structure.

The subject of family and its structure among Mongolian nomads in the late XIX - early XX centuries has been as cause of much debate among researchers. Some thought that whole history of nomadic Mongols was characterized until the early XX century by a large patriarchal family, the second thought is that it was characterized by a small family in early stages, that then is replaced by an extended one. Third group of researchers believed that it was characterized by a large patriarchal family in early stage, and gradually with development of nomadic farming it has been replaced by a small one. Question of whether or not a large patriarchal family has existed in past among nomads remains open. However, our field material shows that in the late XIX - early XX century, a dominant form of family among the Altai Uriankhians was a small individual monogamous family. D.D. Shalkhakov specifically studied the problems of family relations among Kalmyk wrote that "a survey of numerous informants did not confirm the existence of large families in Kalmykia" (Shalkhakov 1982:36). G.G. Banchikov who has also dealt with issues of family relations among the Mongols, wrote that "a primary social unit of Mongolians has long been a small family consisting of husband, wife and their children" (Banchikov 1964:3).

We did not find evidence of the existence of polygamy among Altaic Uriankhians, a practice sometimes has seen with Khalkha and some Turkic-speaking neighbors. According to our field materials, the small family included other relatives - elderly parents of the husband and wife and their unmarried brothers, unmarried sisters and other relatives. K.D. Basayev, who studied the same problem among Buryat material, wrote that they "the shape and size of the family were closely linked to its structural features, i.e., relative's composition. Buryat family consisted of several generations of blood relatives in its ascending and descending lines: two generations (parents and children) in a small family, and three or more generations (old people, parents, their married sons and grandchildren and sometimes great-grandchildren) in a large undivided family (Basayeva 1980:42). D.D. Shalhakov wrote that "Kalmykia - pastoralists in the XIX-early XX centuries, were characterized by a small monogamous family, which was included in family-related group (Shalhakov 1982: 38.)

Among Altai Uriankhians, genus – ovog was patriarchal. Kinship was considered by a lineage of father, though relatives on lineage of mother used to be at premium of honor. Nomadic Mongolians had characterized by the classification system of kinship: all individuals older-uvug etseg (grandfather), emeg ekh (my grandmother), all elderly, are older - uvuu (uncle), emee (aunt), every senior in age - akh (brother), junior - duu (younger brother), every senior in age - egch (sister), the youngest-ohin duu (younger sister).

In the field of kinship, a significant closer relationship was to the mother. Relatives on the mother side belonged to group "nagats." Subject himself to them is called to be as nephew - zee. When performing life-cycle rituals, especially the wedding ceremony and maternity, a significant role was reserved for the relatives' nagats", with a special function during the rites performed nephew, termed "zee".

Relatives on the father's side belonged to the group "avga." Subject to them will be as nephew - ach. Thus, and grandchildren from his daughter would be termed as

"zee", and her son - "ach." Differentiation of kinship implied relationship by blood and marriage: Relatives of his wife - khud, matchmakers, relatives of the wife of the son-khadam. Blood-peculiar relationship evolved by husbands of sisters: husbands of two sisters - baz khurgun, wives of two brothers - bazuud, children of sisters - buluud, children of brothers – ueluud, grandchildren of sisters - bulentseruud, grandchildren of brothers - hayalanuud etc.

After the conclusion of marriage suitor for his wife became as khurgen. All of daughters, who arrived in whatever clan, would become as -beruud. All married women (beruud) - representatives of different clans that make up after the conclusion of the second half of the marital union of one clan, perform basic functions of the commission of a wedding ritual complex. Their role becomes especially important if they were having many children, since the main purpose of marriage was considered continuation of reproduction.

Patriarchal tradition defines the rights and position of each member in a small family. The father is the head of the family - urkhiyn terguulegch. He was, one might say, the absolute master of all movable and immovable property and this determines his position in the family. He directed all the chores associated primarily with the nomadic pastoralists, distributing responsibilities among its members. Willingness of the father is a law for all. He could keep in obedience for his sons for 35 - 40 years, although an adult age for men has already occurred in 16-18 years for the society of Altai Uriankhians. The father had the right to decide the question of marriage of their daughters, often against their will. Argument with him was considered as unacceptable. Even overgrown sons did not dare to object to it. Nevertheless, stories of our informants, families of the Altaic Uriankhians, as they do in families of Mongolian peoples, there were no cases of gross tyranny or arbitrariness on the part of the household head. When dealing with important economic and the other family issues the father would usually consult primarily with older sons. In important economic matters elderly or disabled who lost his father usually replaced by the sons of seniority.

After the father's death the head of household was considered to become the married eldest son, but sometimes, in very rare cases, the rule passed to anyone of the following sons, who was considered the most energetic and able to be the best way to organize and run the economy of the household.

In any family, the great respect and honor enjoyed the woman, mistress - geriyn ezegtey. Husband – nukhur treated very well with his wife in a family. Poll of informants showed that the beating, humiliation and brutal despotism by a husband to his wife were an exceptional phenomenon in the life of Altai Uriankhians. If such a phenomenon has occurred, it is deeply condemned in the society. When dealing with important family matters husband usually consulted with his wife, without neglecting its views and proposals. But the gentle treatment of his wife, particularly when outsiders were, was quite rare. It was considered totally unacceptable disobedience, disrespectful or rude attitude on the part of children (huuhduud) toward the mother - eej. Apart from the fact that mother had all the cares of child-rearing, subsistence of nomadic herders among Altai Uriankhians has laid on woman a multiple of roles: she had to cook food, milk cattle, process dairy products, to observe cleanliness in the yurt, sew clothes and

bedding for all family members, etc. Especially a lot of time, energy and labor she spent for processing sheepskins, leather, ropes of bestial hair, wallow felt for the needs of their families.

According to the stories of older people, there was some kind of seasonality in the performing of chores: during the spring and summer, women were busy milking cows, mares and manufacturing stocks of dairy products for the winter. Tanning hides, leather, and felt making were usually carried out in the fall. Women were mainly engaged with embroidered clothing, headgear, footwear, and felt manufacturing for bedding during the period of autumn and winter. A woman acted completely independently in the household of Altaic Uriankhians. W. Erdniev as an example for Kalmyk women wrote that "despite the fact that Kalmyk woman was in complete subjection to men and under his control, but she enjoyed a certain of freedom and autonomy in the household and daily life" (Erdniev, Maksimov, 2007:300).

It is well known that women of Mongolian-speaking peoples, including the Altai Uriankhians, were unaware of seclusion, which existed among neighboring Kazakhs who profess Islam. According to our field material, she enjoyed full freedom of interaction with men: she participated on an equal footing with men in all family and public holidays and all mass entertainment, she could sit with guests from all walks at the same table, etc. However, according to our field materials for women of Altai Uriankhians as for women of all Mongolian nomads, characterized by respect for fidelity for married women, and chastity for unmarried girls.

Generally used in Mongolian society illicit relations between the sexes are deeply condemned by public opinion and the Mongolian law provides for very severe penalties for committing adultery. In the Mongolian-Oirat statute books in 1640 said about the following: "... if a woman, bound to a stranger, and the mutual desire, maintains self-fornication, then with the women for four (cattle), and men take five (cattle). ... If a girl goes to bed (with men) against wishes, then take (with men), two dozen, and if it was out and her wish, then take the nines (Golstunsky 1880: 49)

Each nuclear family had its pastoral economy apart from the others. Typically, a family of parents lived in a separate tent. Family married sons roamed nearby, also having his own farm, creating a nomadic group, which was called "Khoton", as mentioned earlier.

4.3. Forms of Marriage

Now let's discuss a few of words on the forms of marriage. Marriage in Altai Uriankhians considered obligatory for every person. Old maids and bachelors are not respected. In the marriage rules, there are not preserved such an ancient way of buying his wife such as the exchanging of two family groups of brides. Our informants could not remember any such cases in their khoshuns. During the fieldwork, we found no data on crosscousin marriage between children of sisters and brothers and levirate, i.e., marrying the widow of the younger brother of the deceased spouse, even though researchers say on the existence of such marriages among the other Mongolian nomads (Galdanova1986: 132, Erdniev, Maksimov, 2007:305).

However, marriages with relatives on the maternal line, i.e. with his cousin, second cousin and fourth-relative sisters from the mother, apparently, were very rare. Our informants do not remember such marriages, although sources indicate about their existence among Mongols in ancient times. For example, in "Secret History of Mongols," says: "Esugaja-Batur was going to make a match for his bride from his uncle on his mother's Oelun, her relatives from Olhonut clan, where, and went along with his son Temuchjin" (Secret History of Mongols 1941 § 61). But according to our field materials, marriages of two brothers to the girls who are sisters, were quite common. We found a variety of materials evidencing of such marriage (Lkhagvasuren 1987:20). In addition, Altai Uriankhians had no prohibition on marriage to infidels, such as Muslims, although our informants did not remember a single of such case. Altaic Uriankhians themselves could not explain this fact, but marriages with other Mongolian nationalities were unhindered.

In our time, among Altaic Uriankhians has existed an institute for preparation of son-in-laws -hurgen oroh. When the family had no sons, he was taken into the household son-in-law - hurgen. In such marriages, and a daughter given to him became as heir to property of the father. It could have taken a son-in-law to the household in early childhood of the boy. In such cases, when growing up the boy, the heir to his father's farm, the daughter with the son-in-law would stand as an independent family with its own economy. Becoming as son-in-law, i.e., going to live in a yurt of wife, which is a stranger's home for a man, would be regarded as undesirable, and humiliating. It was mainly practiced for the poor people. The Mongols had a common proverb: to become a son-in-law means to become a farmhand - khurgen hoo huchtey, which basically mean as son-in-law is power. In addition to a purely moral side of the matters, it had a place for a legal consideration. Once becoming as son-in-law, a man has to be under wife, and she was as owner the property. Still parents of the wife alive, they would remain as masters. The arrived son-in-law had no right to dispose of this property and could not get an inheritance. By the end of the XIX century, the other type of marriages, which is called as secret marriages - nuutsaar gerleh had become as common forms of marriage. These marriages were arranged by the kidnapping of bride - ber khulgailakh. There were two types of conclusion of such a marriage:

1. Marriage escape – escape of bride - ber orguulah.
2. Abduction of bride - ber khulgailakh.

Both are considered a violation of established norms of marriage and met with any resistance. Abduction of bride without her consent was a rare occurrence. Our informants knew about it only by hearsay.

During the reporting period, marriages by "escape" were still common among Altai Uriankhians. To free themselves from the authority of their parents, the girl was forced to secretly marry the elect. Marriage by "escape" has existed not only among Altai Uriankhians, but also among the other nationalities, who have been in very close to Altaic Uriankhian historical and cultural contexts. Regarding marriage by abduction of Altaic Altai Mountains, a Russian missionary V.I. Verbitsky at the end of the XIX century wrote: "In the northern Altai, for the most part, bride is stolen. Groom,

persuaded the bride and obtaining her handkerchief in advance by mutual condition, comes for her at night, on a good upland horse, accompanied by unmarried young people. These young people are stealing a bride from their parents' home put her on his horse and prepared to rush to Ulus of the groom or immediate family "(Verbitsky 1893: 105). However, to get a wife to himself in this way might not all. Such an act could decide and choose only by the strong and clever guy who knows how to make a "kidnapping" of the bride with the help of his cronies and with the active assistance on the part of very girls.



Photo 6. Headdress with coral ornaments **shurtei toortsog** for unmarried girls

Early marriages are quite common among Mongolian nomads (Basaeva 1980: 122, Shalkhakov1982: 14). Betrothal of minors, of course, was dictated by different considerations, such as a desire to conclude a union between two families or to strengthen the existing links between them. In all cases, two families who choose to intermarry, after preliminary agreement of negotiations a marriage ceremony was fixed on the future of their children - undugun sui tavikh (Ethnography of Mongolia 1987: 261). Marriages between people of different social groups were also allowed. However, affluent people tried to have marriages in common with each other and joining of people in affinity with the poor was considered as not very desirable for them. By the end of the XIX century, in connection with the further differentiation of society, this tendency becomes dominant among the wealthy Uriankhians. Marriage is often seen as a profitable economic transaction.

An accepted norm of marriage was a marriage of matchmaking for bride-ber guikh. We return to this theme later. Now, briefly about the bride and the bride's dowry. The word "bride" is not in the Mongolian language, although the existence of dowry in the old institution of the nomadic Mongols written by many authors Rubruck (1957:101, Banchikov1964:6). As our informants argued, during the cahoots courtship of the bride,

there was not only haggling about the amount of dowry, but did not arise even talk about it. Many olds remember that put some demands, show the value and the value of bride price were not accepted.

However, the institution of dowry among the Altai Uriankhians at this time reached a fairly advanced form. As our informants argued, could only fiancée at their own discretion dispose of the dowry, the husband had no right to dispose of them. Therefore, she became the owner of a certain part of household goods, and this in turn provides to her a measure of independence in the family.

Bride could bring in their new yurt complex of different things as a dowry - *beriin khereglel*. According to the stories of our informants, the bride as a dowry brings with her first horse, necessarily, of a white suit, complete with horse-harness. This horse is a symbol of the horse on which she could return to his father's yurt, if her fiancée would be bad to her. Sometimes her father gave a dowry of a quiver with arrows, bow with case-horjogo, the symbolic meaning of which lay in the fact that they protect newlyweds from the evil spirits. She also brought a full set of bedding, winter and summer clothing, wood and leather ware, and articles of furniture, etc. Compulsory subjects dowry considered headrests - *der*. Besides the bride's parents must prepare a traditional jewelry set of a married woman and several heads of each livestock species - *inj*. In preparation of the dowry involved all family members, each of them contributes, bringing cloth, silk, skins, coral, and etc. and etc.

Relatives need gifts to the bride during a bachelorette party - *chigee uuh*. Another part of the dowry that is necessarily included curtains - *beriin khushig*, by which dissociated a corner of the yurt, where there was a bed for the newlyweds.



Photo 7 Headdress with silvery ornaments **chikhte toortsog** for unmarried girl.

According to the norms prevailing in the marital relationship, ensuring the bride by the full dowry was required in the issuance of the girls married. In normal families, the dowry preparation began with his childhood of the future bride. Therefore, the betrothal of young or early collusion practiced, we can say to get a longer time for preparation of a dowry.

4.4. Wedding Cycle

The wedding is not just a family celebration, but also it is an important event in the social life of the Altai Uriankhians. Many relatives of the bride and groom, and representatives of various sectors of society would take the most active participation in the processes of the wedding. The great importance was attached at the wedding to the magical and symbolic rituals, whose purpose was to ensure the newlyweds a happy, long, and prosperous life.

As we have noted previously, the most common rules of marriage was the marriage matchmaking for bride-ber guikh. The initial moment of signing the marriage, like any other, was a conspiracy - sui tavikh. The whole cycle of wedding ceremonies would begin from this moment.

It was divided into three stages: pre-wedding, wedding and post-wedding. Rehearsal included the following ceremonies: ber songokh - choice of bride, aman medee khurgekh - oral transmission of information on courtship, am khadag tavikh – presenting a khadag to the girl's parents; zus, khadag tavikh – presenting a khadag with glue, ger burekh - construction and installation of a new yurt for the future spouses, or oyokh - making bedding suite.

Ritual acts that were committed during wedding ceremonies included the following: chigee uuh - drinking fermented mare koumiss, hurgen khuvtsaslakh - ritual of dressing the groom, gezeg buulgakh - unwinding girlish braids, ber mordulakh – farewelling the bride, and shar narand morguulekh - ritual worship of the sun.

Post-wedding stage included such rituals: khoshig tailakh - the removal of the curtain, ber torkhomchlokh - bride and groom visit the yurt of the parents, ber berluulekh – performing prohibitions by wife, etc.

There is a very similar, to those of the Uriankhians, wedding ceremony among Altains of Mountains Altai, Russian missionary V.I. Verbitsky at the end of the XIX century wrote about it: "Wedding ceremony among the southern Altai people are wonderful and breathes with the local poetry" (Verbitsky 1893:98). The same can be said about the wedding ceremony for the Altai Uriankhians. Starting with the courtship, ending with the arrival of the bride to the yurt of groom, the traditional wedding among the Altaic Uriankhians represents a series of colorful rituals and customs.

Matchmaking for the Bride and Pre-Wedding ceremonies.

Now I turn to a specific account of these ceremonies. The first of them is ber songokh - choice of bride. Parents for boys who turned 16-18 years old, discussed among themselves the question of marrying his son and about where to look for a bride. Boys of this age tend to assist the father in all economic matters and were

considered fully capable of independently run the economy. Girls from 17 to 18 years of age were considered as the normal age for marriage. However, surveys of our informants, we can conclude that boys marry at the age of 18 - 25 years old, and girls marry at 17 - 21. A decision about marriage and choice of bride was fully within the competence of parents of boys. According to the stories of our informants parents of the young could discuss the matter with their close relatives like maternal tsusan turul - blood relatives, and paternal yasan turul - relatives of the bone. Most youth was assigned a very modest role in these matters. The big role of parents in deciding marriage and the choice of a bride some researchers contribute to the features of nomadic life and the existence of a nomadic clan exogamy (Shalhakov1982: 14). This is quite applicable to the Altai Uriankhian. Exogamous restrictions apply to relatives on the paternal line. Marriage within the paternal kind is not allowed. The genus can be divided only after seven - eight generations from a common ancestor - the ancestor, when the race grew, bringing a large number of members. Then a special ritual division of the genus is performed and it would result in two separate exogamous families, which already can share brides.

Rules of exogamy were forced parents of young men to seek a bride in a different way. For this father rode all the yurt, where in his opinion, were supposed to be a girl, suitable to his son. If anyone of them makes him sympathetic, he was consulted about it in the first place with his wife. When you select a future bride, parents first would find out the girl's family tree (udam): they are interested whether there were cases of childless among her ancestors and close relatives. This issue was of great importance, because procreation was the cherished dream of all parents and the general meaning of marriage. If they found some information that among her distant relatives were cases of childless, terminally ill and lunatics, these facts are made to think seriously about her candidacy. Further, parents of the young are interested in such issues as good manners, hard work of parents and relatives of the girl. The financial position of the family and the exterior of the girls did not play an important role in choosing a bride, but of great importance was attached to her personal qualities: charm, sociability, good manners, ability to communicate with people of different ages, primarily from senior and junior, appreciated her hard work, resourcefulness, the ability to sew, and run the household. Parents of young man trying to get the daughter, who continued to procreate and at the same time would be a good worker (Lkhagvasuren: 1988:97). After making the selection, the parents of boys usually turned to lama, who defined the possibility of marriage between boy and girl over the years of their birth, guided mainly by Tibetan astrological books. It was believed that the years of birth of bride and groom should be in the line with each other (iveel lived).

Appeal to the lama in deciding about the marriage was considered obligatory for parents of young. Only with the approval of lamas they decided courtship. Lama will also determine which day will be favorable for sending the first matchmaker for the girl's parents (Zhukovskaya 2000: 112)

The first stage in the process of courtship called aman yg hurgeh - transfer of verbal information regarding the courtship. Parents of young men as the first matchmaker would choose a solid reputed person from the close relatives. On the

appointed by lama day, the person would arrive in the yurt of parents of the girl for a leisurely conversation with them, it makes the message that the family of his kind would be willing to promise in marriage of their daughter to the son. After completing its mission the first matchmaker would return. After the departure of the first matchmaker, the parents of girl began to discuss the matter among themselves. The final word on this issue belonged to them, especially mother of the girl. They also could discuss the matter with relatives at both mother and father of the girl. Watching a wedding ceremony among the Altai Uriankhians at the end of the XIX century, G.E.Grumm-Grzhimailo noticed that parents are "... not consulted with her daughter regarding this very important issue for the daughter, but personally and irrevocably decide her fate" (Grumm-Grzhimailo 1926:175) According to our informants, parents, of course, asked the consent of his daughter. S. Badamhatan wrote that parents of the girl would reply to the first marchmaker from the boy's side with the following answer: "... we can give the answer three days later, we learn whether our daughter agrees or not" (Badamkhatan1960: 5). Daughter usually frightened and refused, because proposal for it often happened unexpectedly. She had to be persuaded to teach and think about the future of marriage. In practice, on this subject could speak with her only the mother. According to our surveys, we can assume that the first response to the marchmaker is given usually by the mother. On the primacy of the mother in this important issue wrote, D.D. Shalhakov, who has studied wedding rituals of Kalmyks. He thought it was a relic of matriarchy among the nomads (Shalhakov1982: 11). The girl's parents, when discussing marriage with daughter, attached the great importance to good manners, hard work, practical skills of cattleman, hunter, and the personal nature of the future groom. If they have the negative information about the young man that he is rude, not sociable, a bad worker and not a very good hunter, these facts led them to think seriously and often cause as the failure to the parents of the future groom. (Lkhagvasuren 1989: 213) If the groom turned to be as liking, they, too, for his part turned to the lama, to clarify the possibility of marriage. While the girl's parents are learned regarding the future groom and parents of the young man would prepare for the next visit, in order to commit a ritual of offerings of the first khadag (am khadag tavikh).

After a few days following the first visit of the matchmaker, two men of the advanced age would attend parents of the girl, who are also among those of the closest relatives of the young man. The person who performed the function of the first marriage broker not supposed to come again. The purpose of the visit this time was to test the mood of the girl's parents at wooing their daughter. Matchmakers pretend that they arrived to their yurt by accident, as it is often the case among the nomads. However, parents of girl usually guess who and why visit them. After a friendly chat over the tea, the eldest of the guests filed his snuffbox to the father of the girl, as usual did the nomads at the meeting. Generally, the nomads exchange snuffboxes expressed relative position of the parties. If the father of the girl did not give in exchange his snuffbox, as usual, which meant that parents reject the wooing of their daughter. In this case, the father of the girl would take guest's snuffbox, snuff, and silently would return to its owner. All ends at this. Parents of young men no longer send

the matchmakers to the yurt of the girl's parents. If the girl's father gave in exchange his snuffbox, which meant that the girl's parents look favorably upcoming matchmaking.

Only after this young man's parents would send another distinguished man, too, of senior age from the closest relatives of the young man to the girl's parents, handed him two khadags of blue color and other gifts, including dairy products including milk vodka arkhi. Thus, without probing the mood of the girl's parents, the parents of boys were hesitant on the third visit. A new visitor, the girl's parents took as a very distinguished guest, was seated in the north - western side of the yurt (baruun khoimor). The girl's parents knew that this man came to get their final approval. After exchanging greetings and snuff boxes, a guest turned to the girl's parents with the words: - "We have a good holder of lasso, and you have a skillful mistress. Let's admit them together! "- Uurga bariach ni manaid baina, uyalga oyoch ni tanaid baina!" Saying these words, friend knelt down and brought to the girl's father an expanded khadakh on outstretched hands. Adoption of the khadag by the father of the girl meant that the parents of the girl agree to the courtship of their daughter.

By giving so khadag, a guest got up from his seat and began to lay out the sacrificial gifts to the home altar in the yurt of the girl's father, and outside of the yurt he would commit sprinkling milk on all sides, dedicated to the spirits, and protectors of the surrounding terrain (khangai, delkhii). Accordingly, his mission ended. In very rare cases, the girl's father did not take khadag and pulling a thread from one end, brings it back to the presenter. He this way expresses his opposition to give his daughter to marry into this family.

Rite of Presenting Khadag with Glue Zus.

After completion of the above ritual, the sides began to prepare for a very important event in the long cycle of wedding ceremonies: to perform the rite of presentation to khadag with glue zus, which sounded like zus, khadag tavikh in Mongolian. This ceremony is performed in the yurt of the girl's parents. Before that, the parties chose their mediator - bergen.

Both sides are independent of each other, turned to Lama with the question, what a day for them would be most suitable for presentation to the rite of khadag with glue. Lama not only determines the day, but hour of departure of the delegation from the yurt of young man, and time of their arrivak of the yurt of the girl's parents. Lama has even pointed out the color of the robe for bergen of the young man, with which bergen should eneter to the yurt of girl's father. On that day and hour indicated by Lama, the delegation, which consisted of 5 - 6.5 men from among the close relatives of parents, including bergen, visit to the yurt of the girl's parents. The delegation was led by the father of young man and this time the youth himself is not included in the delegation. On this occasion they carried along with them a blue khadag with the special size and a piece of adhesive zus, dairy products (cheese, milk), and a whole carcass of a freshly prepared sheep specially slaughtered the day before. The parents of the girl also long prepared for getting ready to receive the guests with the special mission. The close relatives of the girl's parents consisting of 5 to 8 persons were supposed to attend the delegation at the time of arrival in the tent the girl's parents. The delegation was greeted as the most distinguished guests, and invited to the north -

western side of the yurt (baruun - hoymor) which is common among all groups of the Mongols. After exchanging greetings, the guests were treated to tea, milk, dairy products, etc.

After this, the father of the young man knelt down and brought the girl's father an expanded khadakh on his outstretched hands with a piece of adhesive zus holding with the right hand over the khadag. A piece of glue symbolized the strength of the future marriage of the youths. The girl's father takes the khadag with the words "Let your status will prosper!" - "Ta bugdiin amar amgalan delgerekh boltugai!" Following it, the father of the young man began to bestow gifts to the girl's parents - Sui beleg. The value of Sui beleg depended on the viability of the young man's parents. It would be necessarily present a tile of tea, and silk for national devel. Gifts were also presented to all presented in the yurt. This ceremony was accompanied by a small feast - Sui belgiin nair. Altaic Uriankhians traditionally observe the terms of this feast (naira) in their yurts. All guests were laid to sit only on the right side of the tent, but the owners - on the left. All participants were feasting on seniority: the oldest was seated as a sign of respect for them in the northern part of the yurt, and the young - is closer to the exit. Refreshments are also served by seniority: to the oldest are served the first and to the youngest the last. Refreshments carried only by specially designated girls. Archi and koumiss were served by a designated middle-aged man (Sonch). He was appointed by the master of the yurt, from among their relatives. He had to entertain the guests by his eloquence, so that they are not bored. All feasts must prepare a feast for all – tavga idee. They were placed on the table in front of the most honored guests, and they were treated everyone in attendance. Feast began with a tea party. Then all were treated to a little tavga idee then are offered with mare's milk, and meat dishes. All are treated with archi at last. It was served only to adults, young people were not supposed to be drinking hard liquor. This order is respected in all their feasts, which were held frequently, especially during the warmer seasons. If someone - that violated this order, his act was condemned, and if someone - or do not know when and what he must do at such feasts, then look in the eyes of those present are not very well-mannered. In addition, the banquet necessarily invited eroolch - individuals who are well read good wishes - erool. After drinking of archi, when spirits rose, all began to sing at feasts. They would sing lingering songs by the length of tunes which are a little bit different from broaching the songs of the other Mongolian nationalities. Our informants claimed that singing at banquets usually began with a song about the Altai. The feast was usually supervised by the master of the yurt. At his command eroolch would read erool, and the rest were singing and drinking. Guests from the side of young man treated those who present at the banquet with items brought with them. On the same day, the guests returned home, they are not supposed to be to stay the night in a yurt of the girl's parents. It was the first out of the cycle of the wedding feast among the Altaic Uriankhians.

After this, boy and girl are officially become as the bride and groom. During the banquet, the parties agree on the percentage of participation from each party to prepare a new tent for the newlyweds. By the custom, the bride prepared the interior, and the groom - the very tent. After the conclusion of the ceremony zus khadag tavikh parties started to prepare for the wedding. Traditionally, the wedding can be played

within one to three years after the betrothal. According to the stories of our informants, after the boy and girl were officially announced as bride and groom, groom's parents send him to the bride's yurt. He stayed there for some time. During this time the bride's parents had an opportunity to assess the future in-law, future spouses themselves - to get accustomed to each other. There are reports from various sources, including "Secret History of Mongols" (Secret History of Mongols 1941: §66) regarding the existence of such a custom among the Mongols in the distant past. Upon studying of wedding ceremony of Tuvians, L.P. Potapov wrote that after zuz, khudag / in Tuvian it is called as Tukhten - IL / bride might host the groom and to join with him in the sexual intercourse before the wedding feast. This is not condemned publicly. So often happened that the promise in marriage a girl becomes pregnant before marriage, and sometimes even manage to give birth, and it was not considered shameful (Potapov 1969: 237-238). Our informants completely denied such a possibility among the Altai Uriankhians. The reason for this, they explained this way: the girl's parents, even at this stage of the courtship reserves the right to refuse to the groom, if he proved himself not very good during the stay.

After the stay in the bride's yurt, it comes a time when supposed to install a new yurt for the future spouses. This ceremony is called ger bureh. It has described in detail by Mongolian ethnographer G. Tserenhand for different ethnic groups of Mongols (Tserenhand 2005:57-60) Parents of the young man prepared all component parts of the yurt: wooden frame, matted hair and ropes for various purposes. The wooden frame of the yurt can be purchased two ways: either by an exchange of cattle for those who are specifically involved in their preparation, or if the boy's father was a carpenter, he could make them himself. Felts for the yurt had to prepare themselves, because while they had not been done on the exchange. Preparation of felt required a lot of time and effort. It is made from sheep's wool in the traditional way. When all was ready, the groom's parents propose on the date of installation of a new yurt. The relatives would gather on this day at the yurt of the parents of the groom. They would bring various supplies needed to install the yurt: Felt, hair cords, etc. In addition, they brought with them dairy products, cottage of cheese byaslag, dried curds aaruul intended for the feast, which is arranged at the end of work. Before the start, all were treated to tea. In the construction of a yurt Altaic Uriankhians build its wooden parts in the strict order. The new yurt is traditionally set to the south - east of the yurt of groom's father. Failure to comply with the rules of construction of the yurt could have negative consequences, so work is overseen - either by the father or someone from relatives of the groom, who knew all the rules.

Pattern of felt mats, cross-linking of individual plates to cover the yurt led by the mother or anyone of the close relatives of the groom. All work, including sewing and cutting out pieces of felt, should be completed by sundown. During the construction of the yurt was coming mother of the bride, accompanied by bergen, and a few of girls - assistants to help in their work. They brought felt, large needle and thread made of camel wool. Mother of the groom prepared a cover for the smokehole (urkh) for new yurt out of felt brought here. When the cover was ready, it was performed the rite of consecration of smoke tube – urkh myalaakh, ritual stretching of felt mats for smoke tube, the rite of good wishes for the yurt - ger erookh. The rite of consecration of felt

cover for smoke tube is done as so: someone from the relatives of groom's father appealed to the groom's uncle on the maternal side - nagats akh with the words: "The river starts from a spring, a relationship begins with a maternal uncle. Please prize and consecrate the urkh! "-" Usni ekh - bulag, urgiin ekh - nagats bilee. Ta urkh myalaaaj ugnu uu! "At the same time, he hands to him a cup of koumiss- chigee. Having taken a cup of koumiss, uncle, first sip a little bit, then started to sprinkle koumiss the urkh first at the center, then at and around the four corners. Sprinkling of koumiss meant that the the urkh has been sanctified. After that spread out the felt cover for smoke tube on the ground, and let seated on it with a number of small children. It symbolizes of what that in the new yurt will be a lot of children. Children fed and by this the ritual is ended. When the installation ended, the ceremony of good wishes starts for a new yurt - ger erooh. The father of the groom is seated at the northern part of the yurt (hoymor). Upon taking his place, he turns the attention to eroolch with the words: "Please provide the good wishes for the new yurt" - "Shine gert eruul hairlana uu. At the same time, he hands to eroolch a full bowl of milk with the khadag, silver coins and a few of wheat grains (khukh taria).

The Eroolch wrapped in khadag coins and wheat grains and bind them to the middle of smoke hole (toono). Then he began to sprinkle the milk all the wooden parts of the yurt, starting with toono. Upon finished sprinkling milk, he began to read the good wishes of the new melodic yurt erool. At this time, the yurt was added milk tea and different food items and started a small feast. After this both sides began preparing a bedding for the newlyweds. Usually the wedding was arranged in the autumn. Autumn in the life of nomads are generally regarded as the most successful time for all parties. Over the summer, cattle would eat off the pastures, and each family had time to stock up plenty of dairy products. Usually the wedding played on so-called white days of the lunar calendar: the day of white horse, the day of the white sheep, and the day of the white rabbit day, etc. The groom's parents made inquiries at the Lama. The monk based on the year of birth both of bride and groom determine which day will be fine for the wedding feast. By the Uriankhian tradition at the time of the wedding, khotons of the fathers of bride and groom would move closer to each other. Khoton of groom's father at that moment would be at the final preparations for the wedding.

A few days before the official date of the wedding the bride would suit a small play -chigee uukh. The first to whom she came to visit was the brother of the mother. The bride and her companions have to stay overnight with the relatives. The next day, before their departure, the bride's relatives made a gift. Further, it would conduct a variety of entertainment ritual contest among the youth. There were many. We can give the names of some of them: shine ger daviruulah - an attack on a new yurt, khivs bulaaldakh - struggle for a rug, khurgen haltiruulakh - rolling the groom, chumug bulaaldakh - the struggle for tibia, ram's tolgoi shideh - throwing sheep's head, etc.

The participation at least in a few of these races involved was required. The first of these was a contest shine ger daviruulakh - an attack on a new tent. It began as follows: When the bride returned from a visit to relatives along with accompanying her girls, they were greeted on the road by a few clever, strong guys on good horses from the bride and was accompanied by almost to the tent of her father. Then these young riders rode in Khoton of groom's father, raced past the new yurt of the newlyweds.

Riders on the fly tried to break off the hair rope, skirted a yurt or disrupt the felt cover of the smoke hole of the new yurt. They even tried to wreck the lattice wall of the yurt. All those who at this point were near a new tent, by all means tried to repel the dashing horsemen. Riders repeated the raid a few times. If the attacker managed to break the rope or pull off the hair felt covering of the yurt, the groom's side was considered as defeated.

Ritual contest khivs bulaaldah-struggle for a felt mat began: smart, strong young man from the groom's side on a good horse went to the yurt the bride's father. On the saddle of his horse lay oblong felt mat, which ends tucked under Stir-ups rope made of leather. In the middle of the path he waited four boys from the bride, also in a good race horses, two by two, facing each other at a distance of two - three paces from each other. A young man with litter in the saddle should slip between them. If he succeeded, then won the groom, and if he had selected her, the victory is getting for the bride.

The symbolic meanings of these games were different. For example, as our informants argued, defeat of the groom in the competitions shine ger daviruulakh - an attack on a new yurt, and khivs bulaaldakh - struggle for a rug, could cause a postponement of the wedding date or even the bride's parents to refusing to give the girl to marry to her fiance. Parents of the bride want to check the seriousness of the intentions of the groom, and if she lost, then it for the bride's parents meant that the groom is not yet ready to take their daughter into their family, i.e., the groom is not trying very hard.

The night before the wedding in khoton of the bride's father came a group of guests from the groom's khoton. It was headed by the groom himself. He carried a hunting rifle on his shoulder. And in the distant past it was the battle bow with arrows. Before the arrival of the guests the bride's side did the following: at the threshold across the door from the inside of the yurt the bride's father placed bag (tulam) of goat skins filled in with water. First to a yurt enters the groom. He had left his gun at the entrance on the right side of the yurt. If the groom's reaction is fast, he could not step on the bag and go around his side. This way, the bride's relatives, "checked" dexterity, ingenuity and resourcefulness of the groom. The guests are treated with tea, dairy products, and cooked mutton. Before the groom is placed a treat on a separate plate, which necessarily had to include a sheep tibia (shaant chomog). After the guests ate and drank, the mother of the bride began to wear on the groom a shirt (tsamts), especially sewn by her for him. Then the bride's father put on a new groom Uriankhian male upper robe (devel). This is to how to perform the ceremony of dressing the groom - khurgen khuvtsaslakh.

The Wedding Ceremony

Last night at the parents' yurt the bride would spend differently than usual. This night she sleeps on a parent's bed, which was located on the left side of the yurt. Next to her, went to bed one of the younger sisters or best friend. Beds are closed with the curtain of white. Before going to sleep the bride should perform ceremonies of gezeg buulgakh - unwinding girlish hairstyle and replacing it with the wedding one. Among the Altai Uriankhians unmarried girls wore twenty braids: on top – two, on the temples -

three, above the forehead - eight or at the back - four. Untwist girlish pigtailed helped her wife of older brother and girls who accompanied her on a tour to her relatives. When unwinding of girlish braids, the bride would pretend to resist, and ones who are untwisting were pretended if they use the force. The girl's hair combed and braided now only seven dreadlocks, which is her wedding hairstyle.

Farewelling the bride (ber mordulakh).

The next morning, at sunrise, 7 to 8 of riders, including two bergens by the groom would come for the bride. At the time of their arrival, everyone who was in the yurt of the bride's father, went out to meet them. In the tent there were a bride, her two bergens and some girls of the same age as the bride. Bride would be sitting on parent's bed behind the curtain. Relatives and friends were sitting around. Outside the door of the yurt there was a young man with a stick in his hand. He was "guarding" the bride. The bride's parents and some close relatives who came to farewell her, stood at the entrance to the yurt to the right. And those people who came together with groom for the bride standing waiting for the groom takes his bride from her father's yurt. They stood on the left side of the entrance to the yurt. First, the groom and behind him one of two bergens would enter the yurt of bride's parents. When the groom and bergen approached the entrance, a young man who stood at the entrance of the yurt with a stick in his hand pretends to prevent them. They also pretended to persuade him.

Having come into the tent, groom and bergen would not sit down and talk among themselves. The groom would come to his bride and say: "let's go" - "yavya!" . He had to make a bride from a yurt on his hands. At this point, the girls who sat around the bride, pretended that they did not want to give her to him and "pushed" and "beat" him. Bride also pretended that she did not want to leave the parental yurt. The groom pretended that he had to force her to take away. When the groom comes out of the yurt carrying the bride over his arms, one of the riders who came along with the groom fiance, tucked it into his horse with a white suit. Thus the bride and the groom are on the same horse together.

Then all sat on their horses and cortege touches the road. At this point, the girl's father takes out the tent full bucket of milk, and her mother started sprinkling milk (tsatsal urgukh) after the bride and groom. By tradition, the bride's parents did not go along with them. When the cortege touched in a way, the bride should not look back toward the parent of the yurt. Altaic Uriankhians believed that if she look back, her happiness will stay in a yurt of the parents. Therefore, a man who was carrying her on his horse, closed her eyes when she unwittingly made an attempt to look back. Ahead the cortege drove the groom himself at a hunting rifle with a bipod pubescent. Behind him rode the bride. The horse on which rode the bride led one of the wives of his older brother of the groom and two bergens of the bride followed right on her horse. Before the bride rode two men, covering the bride's face, stretched out before her curtain that hung the night before in front of her bed. The curtain was attached to two sticks. It is interesting to note that other Mongolian ethnic groups, whom the Altaic Uriankhians lived in the neighborhood with, also closed the curtain of the bride's face, but it was done differently (Ethnography of Mongolia, 1996: 137). Russian missionary V. I. Verbitsky who observed the wedding ceremony among the mountainous Altai people at

the end of the XIX century, wrote on the existence of such a curtain among Altai people during the wedding. Here's what he writes: "When everything is ready, then designate a day on which the bride would move in with her fiancé. Two young men /pals/ on horsetop approach the bride's yurt, each of them in the hands of a small birch trees, and the curtain is attached to them. The bride is brought atop of a special, and saddled horse. These buddies will go to the bride's side, holding in front of her fortified by birches curtain, until a new yurt of her fiancé "(Verbitsky 1893: 102).

Our informants stated that Altai Uriankhians did it to protect the bride from the evil eye. According to sources in the distant past to carry the bride into the open, especially to show it to a stranger among the nomads was considered dangerous. An example is the famous episode of "Secret History of Mongols" when Esugaj-ba'atur, head of the tribe Tayichi'ut, stole from the Met in the steppe merkity Eke - CHiledu Oelun his bride, which he drove in a closed carriage, hiding from prying eyes, and you accidentally see Esugaj - ba'atur looking into this cart ("Secret History of Mongols" 1941: § 54 -56). Kidnapped bride became the wife of Esugaj-ba'atur mother and creator of the Mongol empire of Genghis Khan, which nevertheless does not justify the act of the thief.

On the way a wedding convoy made a traditional ritual contest chumug khuukh-chasing rider, having kept with him tibia of sheep (shaant chumug). It was held as follows: a few people from the groom's side on the route of cortege make a fire, and they would burn juniper. Immediately there was a race-horse ready, on which sat a clever young man. Under the belt he had picked a sheep tibia. When approaching a wedding convoy, he raced toward the yurt of groom's father. In pursuit of him rushed the rider from the team of the bride. His task was to select the tibia of the ram from that rider. When the riders have sped past the wedding convoy, the groom took off a gun from the shoulder while not getting off his horse made a shot in another direction. By gunshot, the horses raced even faster. Chasing the rider with the tibia continued at a distance of about - 5 km. If the second rider was catching up on the first, and tried to wrest with power from him a bone. With a little of luck, the bride's side wins, but otherwise - the groom's side. Often, these competitions organized from three to five times.

The rite of worship to yellow sun (shar narand murgukh).

When the groom left for the bride, one member of the family watches for their arrival, standing atop a high mountain. Noticing approximation of the wedding convoy, he shall inform it to the parents of the groom. Wedding procession at first did three laps clockwise around khotons of groom's father, and then stopped at the entrance to the groom's yurt.

All dismounted from their horses, groom and the bride put on their knees, a white felt, which stretched in three steps from their new yurt: the groom was standing on the right side, and the bride on the left facing the entrance of the yurt. A traditional ornament of the Altaic Uriankhians was laid with wheat grains at the center of the felt. Once they took their places, a tubular bone of sheep is presented to them, and the groom would hold in his left hand a thicker part of the bone, and the bride holds in her

right hand a thinner part of the bone. Behind them an eldest of the brides would stand and she spoke in a loud voice:

Bow to the yellow sun

Bow to the tibia of sheep

Bow to the four parents.

Uttering these words she bent slightly the heads of the bride and groom ahead, touching by her palm of her hand to their heads. The young men bowed in silence four times to the direction of sunrise. While all these happened, one of the men who drove the curtain in the face of a bride on the way of a wedding convoy, managed to hang a white curtain just below the bed on the left side of the in a yurt of the newlyweds. When the worship of the sun was over, the bride and groom got up from their seats while preparing to enter into their new yurt. The first entry is made by a bride and then - the groom. Behind them parents of the groom enter into the yurt. Entering the tent, the bride sat on the floor on the left side of the yurt before the hearth. Here, by a sign indicated by a daughter she did three bows in the direction of the hearth, and then went along with the bride behind a white curtain. There, she changed into clothes of the married woman. Her hair was loosened and made into two braids. Bergen helped her. From there, she came out in full attire of a married woman and began to brew tea. To brew the tea, she initially stoked heavy fire in the hearth. Then she put the iron pot on the hearth, and the wife of the elder brother uttered a wish: "May the family be always in abundance! "-" Khais ni khusantai, kharaach ni utaatai baikh boltugai! "She has also helped to cook tea, preparation of which was somewhat different than the other Mongolian peoples west of the country. Tea is brewed among Altaic Uriankhians in the following way: first cooked regular tea without milk. Then the tea is completely emptied from the boiler in a large wooden bucket and an empty pot was poured milk in the right quantity. When the milk is boiled, content of the wooden bucket was poured to the boiled milk and heated the mix to a boil.

When the tea was ready, the young wife regaled them to all present in the tent. First she served tea to the father of her husband and then to the mother. This procedure for serving the tea she complied with all life. The tea is then poured to another on seniority. Everyone was offered tea, she again went behind the curtain. When she found herself behind a curtain, her husband's father just lifted the curtain in halfway and holding his hunting rifle from the bottom, and three times with a loud voice asked: "hard" - "Khund uu? "," Easy "-khungen yy? "Every time sitting in the tent people responded "seriously "-Hund". At the third attempt, he lifted the curtain completely. At the same time he uttered those words of praise: "Let them look wider!"-"Anisnaa khalia, atgasnaa tavi!." When he uttered these words, the young wife went out there and sat down beside her husband at the northern part of the yurt. At this time, her sister poured to her tea. While she drank tea, the father of her husband would get up from their seats and secured khadag on the top open. His example was followed by the guests. Thus began the wedding feast. I must say that this feast was not prolonged. It was not supposed to drink milk vodka arkhi. The father of the husband was poured, but he did not drink, but only symbolically just took a sip. Drank only tea and mare's milk. completion of the wedding ceremony declared one of bergens.

After the departure of guests bergens do the cleaning in a yurt. Then one of them went to close the top felt cover of the yurt. When she returned to the tent, they all begin the preparation for the marriage bed suite: unfolded three layers of bride's felt mattresses with a green border, on top of them lay three layers of groom's felt mattresses with a border of red. Large headrest (ikh der) was placed at the head, drawing the face to the hearth. Then it was covered with a blanket. Upon finishing the making of the marriage bed, newbeds sat on a bed and fed them with sheep's cervical vertebra, which had been pre-cooked and hung on the upper end of the right wall of the yurt (khaniin tolgoi). Each of the newlyweds to three times bit off chunks of meat with their teeth and ate, after which they were placed on the bed and covered with a blanket. This ceremony is called the joining of head pillows (der niilulekh). Bergens then removed from the yurt. The eldest of them for some time remained near the tent of the newlyweds. Making sure that everything is normal in the yurt, she soon went to sleep, too. Our informants claimed that in earlier times, the eldest of the daughters, leaving usually in the tent to help advice to the newlyweds, in which they are particularly needed in the first wedding night. The next morning the bride would rise early, and the first thing is open the upper top of the yurt, which is as usually happens in a family of Altaic Uriankhians. After the opening the top smoke-hole, she tied khadag to its hair rope. Then she opened the top smoke-hole of the yurt for husband's parents. After that she started cooking tea in the tent. Ready tea she poured out first to husband, who had already by this time got up and waited for the tea was ready. Served tea to her husband, she then poured the tea in traditional tea Uriankhian dombo and carried it into the yurt of husband's parents. Thus began the first morning of a young family.

On the same day by noon invited into the tent of all married couples, who served the newlyweds during the wedding. There was arranged a banquet (bergediyn naira) for daughters, wives, older brothers, wife and husband, all were treated koumiss and arkhi, meat and dairy foods.

4.5. Post-Wedding Ceremonies

Post-wedding ritual actions began with a ritual removal of curtain (khushig tailakh). After the wedding the parents of the wife announced their relatives on which day of the three post-wedding days they are going to celebrate this rite. A large group of guests headed by the father of a young wife would visit the yurt of newlyweds on the appointed day. Specifically for this rite he brought the carcass of a sheep slaughtered on the eve of, and boiled mutton ribs, (it was called khushignii uvchuu – breast of curtain), large amounts of dairy products, including arkhi and mare's milk, and various household utensils. Guests were welcomed by the couple and husband's parents at the tethering area. This is the first visit of the wife's parents in a yurt of newly married couple. They are seated in the northern honorable part of the yurt. Parents of the husband placed next to them. Daughter had cooked them milky tea and regaled all with tea, and then dairy products. On this occasion celebrated with a big feast. According to the stories of our informants, it is the biggest feast of the wedding in a long series of wedding cycle among the Altai Uriankhians. During the feast, father of the wife got up from his seat and came to the curtain, which still hung in front of the bed of the

newlyweds. Father rented a curtain, at which time his mother presented him milk in a wooden bowl. Father sprinkled milk curtain, neatly folded it and gave his daughter. The curtain remained with her as a dowry. The symbolic meaning was to remove the curtain that now in the tent began normal family life of the newlyweds.

Parents of the wife stayed the night with young couples. When the next day her parents were going to go home, mother put a small stone in white and a few grains of wheat which were brought specially from their yurt on the hem of daughter's robe (devel).

At the same time she uttered these words: "Be brighter than gold and be heavier than stone!"-"Altnaas ungutei, chuluunaas hund!" It was the wish of happiness for her daughter in her new life. While his mother is not left for home, and the bride did not get up from her seat. Beside her in the tent remained its bergen. She sat on her lap. After the departure of the mother, bergen took white stone, and grains with the hem of the new wife and hid them in a large headrest previously wrapped in khadag. Newlyweds treasured this gem and wheat grains until the end of their life together. The final initiation of new wife to the clan of her husband, and her transition into the category of full-fledged mother were associated with the birth of her child.

According to tradition, a return visit of Uriankhian married couple to the wife's parents, could only take place after the year, and sometimes even three years after the wedding. Until then, they have roamed away from yurt of his wife's parents. When it was time to visit the parent of the wife, the couple came with gift (beriykhishig). Then on this trip no one would accompany with. In addition, they did not visit her parents in the season when it was played out of their wedding, but in the other. On the occasion of their visit it was arranged a small feast. After this visit, her daughter could come to the parent's tent at any time. By this it ends the wedding cycle of the Altaic Uriankhians.

5. Conclusion

Altai Uriankhians are among those ethnics who have been poorly studied and sparsely reflected in historical and ethnographic literature. The first scholars who have written about them were the famous Russian investigators - travelers such as A.M. Pozdneev, G.N. Potanin, G.E. Grumm-Grzhimailo, and M.V. Pevtsov.

Since middle of the XIX century, they had periodically visited khoshuns of Altai Uriankhians that allowed them to personally observe the image of their life, traditions and customs, etc. Their travel notes had left to us the valuable information on place of residence, life, material and spiritual culture of Altai Uriankhians. Information, contained in their work, revealed that Altai Uriankhians wandered between Rivers of Chingil and Bulgun in the summers while approaching Altai in winter at times when these travelers visited their khoshuns.

Starting from 1960's of XX century, to the study of history and traditional culture of nomadic tribes of western Mongolia, including Altai Uriankhians, got involved scientific institutions of Mongolia: Institute of History of Mongolia, Institute of Linguistics and Literature both of Academy of Sciences of Mongolia, etc.

Employees of these scientific organizations have been engaged in the collection and study of materials relating to economy, life and traditional culture of Altai Uriankhians.

They have gathered materials on the lifestyle, materialistic and spiritual cultures, including religious beliefs, customs, habits, about burial rites and maternity, as well as literature, folk art, and handcrafts, etc. Despite of the extensive work done in those years with respect to the collection of information on the history and traditional culture of Altai Uriankhians, we should recognize that hitherto these materials are still not sufficiently exposed to in-depth analyses and scientific interpretation.

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GLOSSARY

Ail - nomadic group, consisting of two or three related families.

Aimak - administrative and territorial unit in Mongolia.

Airag Айраг(кумыс) - drink of fermented mare's milk.

Alon gua - Mother of Bodonchir, founder of the borzhigin tribe.

Ambani Амбань— feudal prince, who had the title гуна (Prince of fifth degree).

And - friend, comrade, and sister.

and winter versions, the lining of the winter one consists of lambskin, summer one - of

Argal - dry dung of cattle, the main type of fuel in a yurt.

Argal - wild mountain sheep.

Arkhi - Milk Vodka.

Bergen - women who would perform the role of mediator between the bride and

Bituun - New Year's Eve on the lunar calendar.

Bogd - saint.

Boodog - kind of roast meat dish cooked in a special way.

Boov - cakes made of wheat flour used in the New Year and other ceremonies.

Burkhan – deity, celestial.

Burkhanii shiree - altar, on which are placed bronze statues of Buddhist deities and bodhisattvas, the sacred Buddhist books as well as the other important attributes in a yurt.

cotton.

Dalai lama - the title of head of the school Gelukpa, which was first introduced in Mongolia in 1578 by Altan Khan.

Dees – rope made of animal hair.

Deli - Mongolian National robe with the right side openings, and it has both summer

Dobu mergen - a distant ancestor of Genghis Khan.

Eruul—good wishes in the poetic form, a form of the oral poetry of the Mongols.

Gobi – Desert in Mongolia.

Golomt - hearth in the center of the home, around which is organized space in the groom, teaching them the execution of various traditional rituals during the wedding, hole of the yurt.

Khadak - silk scarf of blue, yellow or white colors, which is presented at the different occasions as a token of good wishes.

Khalkha - the most numerous ethnic group in Mongolia.

Khantaaz - Men's vest, part of the national dress of the Mongols.

Khashaa - corral.

Khoimor— prideful place at the northern part of the yurt.

- Khoshun** - administrative unit during the rule of the Qing Dynasty in Mongolia.
- Khoton** - community, which, move and work together to accomplish common business tasks.
- Khudon** - rural area, the periphery.
- Khuree** - ancient way of placing yurts in a circle, characteristic for many of the nomadic peoples
- Khurmusta** - supreme heavenly deity in the mythology of the Mongol peoples.
- Khutukhta** - the highest hierarchy of the Buddhist clergy in Mongolia.
- Magtaal** – praise, odic genre of Mongolian poetry.
- Maikhan** - Summer Tent.
- Morin khuur** - Mongolian national stringed instrument similar in sound to the cello.
- Naadam** (three games of the mean) - traditional national sports: wrestling, archery, and horse racing.
- Nair** – feast, festival, fun, celebration.
- Nom** – teaching, book
- Noyon** - Mr., Prince, and military leader.
- Nutug** - nomadic, native terrain, valleys and mountains, steppe and river, where is available a sufficient reserve of grazing and hunting grounds.
- Obo** - pile of stones on the mountain tops, mountain passes, on the banks of rivers, lakes, representing the altar of "owner" of the site or locality.
- Oirati** – Generic name of the nomadic tribes inhabiting in the western Mongolia: derbets, Torguts, zahchins, Altai Uriankhians, and etc.
- Rashaan** - healing spring water, mineral water, holy water..
- Sakhius** - spirit-keeper of the family and tribes of the Mongols.
- Sumon** - administrative unit in Mongolia, equivalent to region in Russia.
- Tavagtai idee** - dairy and other products, posted on a wooden plate, guests are hosted by them in a yurt.
- Toono** – The round hole in the central arches at the most top of the yurt, which serves as a chimney.
- Toortsog** - Headwear borderless with a brush made of filaments of varying lengths.
- Tsagaan idee** (white food, dairy) – milk and milk products.
- Tumen** - ten thousand, division unit of troops in medieval Mongolia.
- Urkhi** – Opening for smoke going-out of Ger, felt square, which closes out the smoke who also would act as intermediary between the parents of boys and girls.
yurt.

Zolgokh - New Year's greeting.

Zus - common yellow glue which Altaic Uriankhians is done in the traditional way from the skins of animals and it is utilized for the domestic applications.